

The Punta Gorda Herald

PUNTA GORDA — In Tropical Southwest Florida, a Seaport on the Famous Charlotte Harbor — a Town that is Known for its Natural Attractions and the Hospitality of a Cosmopolitan Citizenship

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RENDER SERVICE TO AGRICULTURE

SOUTHEASTERN BIRDS DESTROY INSECTS

Boll Weevils and Other Destructive Pests Eaten by Many of the 460 Species of Birds in the Region.

Washington, D. C.—At least 66 species of birds found in the Southeastern United States are of service in destroying the cotton boll weevil, according to ornithologists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. A much larger number of the 460 different species found in the Southeast also render important service to agriculture by feeding on various insects which attack field crops, garden truck, forage plants and fruit throughout the region. These facts have been determined by extensive field and laboratory studies made by the Biological Survey, the results of which have just been published by the Department of Agriculture as Farmers' Bulletin 755, "Common Birds of Southeastern United States in Relation to Agriculture."

The most active of the 66 feathered enemies of the boll weevil, it was found, are the orioles, which are among the few birds actually taking the insects from the squares of the cotton plant, and the swallows, which feed on the weevil while the latter are in flight seeking to extend their range. In winter the most efficient enemies of the boll weevils are blackbirds, meadow larks, titlarks and Carolina wrens. The cotton worm is eaten by 41 species of birds, of which the cuckoos are the most effective. These birds frequently attack the boll worm and feed on the cotton worm.

White grubs, which are a serious pest not only to corn but to strawberries garden crops and grasses, are eaten by 57 species of southeastern birds. Wire worms and their adult forms, click beetles another pest of corn, are consumed by 128 kinds of birds while 55 species feed on bill bugs, which also attack corn. Cutworms, which often occur in the Southeast in summer and fall and attack practically all vegetation, are eaten by 88 species of birds.

Chinch bugs, which are extremely destructive to corn and wheat and which are supposed to have but few natural enemies, the Biological Survey found are eaten by 24 species of birds. Of the other insects attacking corn, the Southern corn root-worm, or spotted cucumber beetle, is eaten by 26 birds, and the brown root chaffer by 21. The Southern fig eater, which feeds as well on other fruit, is destroyed, by 14 species of birds, the crow leading in efficiency.

Of the insect pests feeding on forage crops, practically all kinds are eaten by some group of Southeastern birds. One of the most important of these pests—leafhoppers—are consumed by 100 different kinds of feathered enemies in the Southern states and a score or more of birds feed on the various kinds of clover weevils.

There are many bird enemies of truck crop pests also in the Southeast. From 19 to 33 species of birds were found to eat each of the following: Flea beetles, sweet potato flea beetles, grapevine leaf beetles, grape flea beetles, bean leaf beetles, rice weevils, Colorado potato beetles, and the 17-year locusts. The survey disclosed that 49 species of Southeastern birds feed on horse flies, which, while they do not attack plants, are exceedingly annoying to both humans and animals and even transmit some forms of disease.

The Biological specialists who made the survey of insect-eating birds in the Southeast, draw the conclusion that the birds of this region are much more important to agriculture than is generally supposed and that farmers should recognize the fact and do all in their power to protect their feathered friends. The bulletin may be secured free of charge on application to the U. S. Department of Agriculture as long as the Department's supply lasts.

The Florida Democracy Needs to Hold a Convention

The Democratic party of Florida should be called together in an old-fashioned convention to heal the wounds and bind the torn ends of the party together again. Florida has not had a party convention in more than ten years, and the party is drifting apart.

In Georgia they have a nominating primary every two years, but this is immediately followed by a convention that nominates the nominees of the primary, issues a platform for the guidance of the party's candidates and the legislature; and they make a few Democratic spread-eagle speeches, honor the defeated candidates in some way, so as to make them go home feeling good, and otherwise bring the party back together again.

Why not save the positions of delegates to the national convention and the presidential electors for the convention and give those places to the defeated candidates for higher state offices?

Since the last Democratic convention in Florida, the party here has been torn to shreds by several heated primaries, and nothing has happened to re-unite it. The party in this state really must have a get-together of some kind. We have been steadily drifting apart until we have lost each other; families have been divided against themselves.

There was never a better time since the primary than now to hold a convention in this state. All of the old factional lines have disappeared. They disappeared in the recent gubernatorial fight, and what new lines were drawn by that contest were wiped away by the post-election statement of the governor-elect. Now is the time for the convention.

No one could say that the purpose of a convention is to nominate candidates, if it were held at this time; but there could be no objection to the adoption of a platform for the guidance of the legislature.

Young men are coming into their majority in Florida and beginning to vote who do not know what a Democrat is or ought to be; they never heard an old-fashioned Democratic speech, and the party really means nothing to them except something to swear that you belong to in order to vote. Let's have a convention and re-unite the Democratic party in Florida.—Tallahassee Record.

Florida Game Laws Summarized

Florida—Deer, quail, wild turkey, duck, Nov. 20—March 10; introduced pheasant, Nov. 20-Dec. 20; squirrel, Oct. 1-March 1.

The Florida game laws require hunting licenses of residents and non-residents. The fee is \$1 for a resident of the state to hunt in his home county; \$3 for a resident of the state, for each county; and \$15 for non-residents of Florida, for each county in which he intends to hunt.

Night hunting, sale of game, hunting on posted lands, the use of artificial light in hunting deer, use of traps or snares, are all prohibited. Transportation companies must inspect shipper's hunting license and require shipper to accompany game.

Game birds are swan, geese, brant, river and sea ducks, rails, coots and gallinules, shore birds, plovers, surf birds, wild turkeys, grouse, pheasants, quail and turtle doves.

Hunters are restricted to one deer, two turkeys, twenty quail (or twenty-five birds of other or several species) in one day; to three deer, ten turkeys or 300 of any other game birds species during one season.

Monday was an ideal day for hunting, and no doubt thousands of quail and many deer and wild turkeys were killed. During the closing days of last week and on Sunday, fully a hundred automobiles loaded with hunters and equipments passed through this section of DeSoto on their way to hunting grounds in this and Lee county. The destruction of game this week must have been immense.

FARM AND GROVE IN FLORIDA

Agricultural News Service University of Florida College of Agriculture

Extensive Potato Plantings Will Be Made This Season

Growers commonly plant Irish potatoes on beds, not because they generally do better on elevations, but because they usually give best yields on moist soils and bedding is necessary to give drainage. If potatoes are to be planted on well drained soil they may be given level cultivation. Beds may make cultivation and digging more convenient, and a bed six inches high is not objectionable even where it is not necessary.

A. P. Spencer, district agent for the University of Florida Extension Division, reports that a large acreage of potatoes probably will be planted this season on a wide variety of soils. Potatoes do best on soils containing a large amount of organic matter. The most successful growers provide some form of irrigation since growth is apt to be slow during spring droughts.

What Are Performance Record Trees?

Do you know what performance record trees are? Here, in substance, is the definition given by Leo B. Scott, Bureau of Plant Industry, in his lecture before the Citrus Seminar at the University of Florida: Performance record trees are trees budded from parents of known production and performance, whereby the amount and quality of fruit which the offspring will produce is assured.

It is not enough that the parentage of the tree be known. Pedigreed trees are no better than any other kind if their parents were not performance record trees. Performance record trees guarantee not only the variety but the amount and quality of fruit as well.

Growers should insist on performance record trees and they should guarantee them by selecting the budwood themselves from trees, the performance of which they know. Do not accept the nurseryman's statement that the trees are performance record stock. Some nurserymen do not know the difference themselves and others merely want to sell trees.

The purchase of performance record trees is a means of eliminating a great many risks. In fact, it insures productive trees. Aren't there enough doubtful possibilities in citrus growing without neglecting to assure quality and production?

Preserve Some Fungus Material For Summer Whitefly Crop

The fungi which attack whitefly larvae are usually abundant in the fall. These fungi are usually distributed in groves at the beginning of the rainy season, in June. But they are relatively scarce when they are needed, owing to preceding dry weather which is unfavorable to them. The only way to insure a good catch of fungi in the grove is to collect the spores of the beneficial parasites.

The material keeps well in cold storage. Directions for preparing the leaves bearing beneficial fungi given by J. R. Watson, entomologist to the University of Florida Experiment Station, are: Collect the leaves in fall when the fungi are abundant and allow them to dry a week or ten days, in an airy room out of the rain and direct sunlight. Put the leaves in a tight tin box and place in storage where the temperature is usually below 40 degrees F. Next June the material will be fresh, bright and capable of growth.

Growers who do not have cold storage facilities may dry the fungus and protect it from moisture until it is needed. The leaves should be allowed to dry thoroughly in a shaded, well protected place. Place them loosely in a box and cover them to exclude dust and sunlight. Preserve in a dry place. It is best to collect this material as late in fall as possible.

The dried material will give a catch in the spring but no one so good as that preserved in cold storage.

Short Course for Club Boys At University Dec. 4-9

The grown up farmers have their citrus seminar, livestock meet, and farmers' short course. Future farmers will have their own meeting this year at the University of Florida. The Extension Division has planned a short course club for boys. This meeting will be held during the week of December 4. Expenses of most of the boys will be paid by scholarships won in club contests. The scholarships will include transportation to and from Gainesville and board and lodging during the course.

Each boy will exhibit a ten-ear sample of corn. It is expected that some pigs may be shown also. A series of lectures and demonstrations has been planned so that the boys may receive instruction that will aid them further in club work and future farm operations. Mornings probably will be spent in class work and the afternoons in laboratory exercises and demonstrations. Some field trips will be made in the vicinity of Gainesville.

Station Studies New Tomato Disease

A tomato disease which has been causing trouble in certain sections of South Florida has been studied by the University of Florida Experiment Station. Dr. C. D. Sherbakoff, associate plant pathologist to the Station, has charge of the investigation. The disease first came to his attention at Goulds, Fla., in January, 1915. Since then he has found it at other places, both on the East and West Coasts.

The disease has been called the buckeye rot, owing to the resemblance of the spot it causes to the eye of an animal. It has been observed only on the fruit in the form of a grayish or pale to dark greenish brown, often distinctly zonate, rot. The rot is hard when the fruit is green and somewhat soft when it is mature. The surface is smooth and without fungal growth in the field. When the fruit is enclosed in a damp atmosphere in a room, the fungus which causes the rot can be seen on the surface. The affected parts retain their normal shape.

The disease attacks the fruit in all stages of its development and starts almost invariably at the point where the fruit touches the ground. Since the fruit naturally touches the ground most commonly with its blossom end, the disease often appears as a peculiar form of blossom-rot, for which it has been mistaken.

Dr. Sherbakoff has concluded from his experiments that the disease is caused by a fungus, *Phytophthora terrestris* n. sp. For control he recommends that the tomatoes be staked so that the fruits will not come in contact with the ground. Since the disease develops after the fruits are picked, it is not advisable to ship any bearing the disease. Dr. Sherbakoff suggests that the tomatoes be picked and spread in a thin layer so that the fruits do not touch. In a few days the infected fruits will develop the disease and can be eliminated.

Join the Farm Loan Association if you must have money, but discharge the debt as soon as you can. There is no use in paying even five per cent interest. Grow something to market every month in the year and something to eat every day in the year. The University of Florida Extension Division has been preaching the live at home doctrine for several years, and if farmers had followed the advice the scramble for a Farm Loan Bank would not have been necessary in this state.

County School Affairs — Many New Buildings

This week has certainly been a busy time for the county board of education. Superintendent J. O. Bickley and the board members, composed of: F. B. McClelland, H. A. Ware and S. B. Hogan, have been in session for several days at the court house, and much business has been transacted.

The board reports the following items of news that will be of interest to all progressive citizens of the county:

On Monday, an election was held in the Fort Ogden school district in which the vote stood 35 to 28 in favor of erecting an \$18,000 school building for that little city. The plan of the board of education is to turn the old building into a teachers' home. It is a commodious building and with little changes can be made an excellent home.

There is a fine flowing well on the grounds, by which water can be lifted into a two-story building, and which will furnish an adequate supply for all purposes. The building will be a two-story brick.

The board called an election in the Gardner district for the purpose of erecting a \$10,000 junior high school building, also an election in the Limestone district for an \$8,000 school building, an election in the Fort Green Springs district for a \$17,000 high school building. This to be consolidated with another district and to bear the name "Fort Green Consolidated High School."

The board also reports as recently completed: A school house at Owens, costing \$3,000; a fine two-story brick house at Charlotte Harbor, costing \$6,500; school building at Lake Branch, east of Bowling Green, costing \$1,500; a house at Torrey, costing \$2,000; a handsome two-story brick structure at Zolfo, costing \$7,500, a magnificent two-story brick school house at Bowling Green, costing \$15,000, nearly complete; a \$2,000 school house at Bassenger, a \$2,000 school house at Murdock, nearly complete; and a \$2,000 school building at College Hill, west of Bowling Green, which will soon be finished.—Arcadia News, Nov. 17th.

Fairs to be Held

Among the fairs and assemblies to be held in Florida during the next two months are the following:

Jan. 22-23—Fourth annual meeting of the Florida Drainage Association, West Palm Beach.

November 28 to December 1—Marion county fair at Ocala.

December 5-9—Duval county fair, at Jacksonville.

January 23-27—Poultry and pet stock show at Jacksonville.

February 14-17—Osceola county fair at Kissimmee.

February 20-23—Manatee county fair at Bradentown.

February 20-24—Sub-tropical mid-winter fair at Orlando.

February 2-10—South Florida fair and Gasperilla carnival at Tampa.

A feature of the south Florida fair at Tampa in February will be the horse racing and special efforts will be made to secure the highest class of entertainment along this line. Field Agent Curry has been to a number of fairs recently making arrangements to secure fine stock for the fair there. He returned a few days ago from Macon, Ga., where he made arrangements with a number of noted horsemen to bring their stock to the fair.

The production of corn in Florida this year is given by Government figures as 12,600,000 bushels. At the rate of increase in the cultivation of this staple crop in the past few years it will not be long until this yield is doubled. And the writer remembers being told that corn could not be grown with any degree of success in this part of the country!—Lakeland Telegram.

Bare limbs are becoming common in Washington streets. On trees of course.

INTEREST NOW CENTERS IN ROUMANIA

TEUTONIC FORCES IN WALLACHIA A MENACE

Paris Claims a Complete Victory for the Entente Allies from the Cerna River to Lake Presba in Macedonia.

London, Eng.—With the end of the first stage of the Franco-Serbian campaign which resulted in the capitulation of Monastir by the Bulgarians and Germans and a diminution of hostilities in the Somme region of France, except for bombardments and isolated infantry actions, Roumania has again become the center of interest.

Driving eastward through western Wallachia, the Austro-German forces are now reaching out for Craiova, lying on the railroad midway between the Danube town of Orsova, Hungary, and Bucharest. This maneuver places a menace in the rear to the retreat of the Roumanians fighting in the north of Hungarian soil and disputing with the Austro-Germans the passages of the Transylvanian Alps leading to the plains of Wallachia.

In the Jiu Valley region the retirement of the Roumanians continues, and in the Capulung sector Petrograd reports that fresh Roumanian attacks against the Teutonic Allies have been unsuccessful. On the Danube front in Dobrudja, artillery engagements are in progress from Silistria to Oltina.

The fighting in Macedonia from the Cerna river to Lake Presba has ended in a complete victory for the Entente Allied troops, says the Paris War Office. The Serbs have not yet entered Monastir, captured Sunday, the town having been virtually destroyed, according to unofficial reports. The Entente forces have occupied villages to the north of the town and are declared to be still in the pursuit of the Germans and Bulgarians. Berlin says, however, that the newly chosen positions selected for their retirement north of Monastir have been entered by the Germans and Bulgarians without pressure from their antagonists, and also that new German forces have reached the fighting zone.

The German artillery on the Somme front, near Beaumont-Hamel and Guedecourt and in the Verdun section near Douaumont, have already shelled British and French positions.

Strong forces of Austrians in an assault on the summit of Hill 126 on the Carso front of the Italian theater have captured Italian entrenchments.

Cold weather has set in on the Russian front and as a consequence little fighting is going on there.

What about the lucky 13 in our politics? In 1912 Woodrow Wilson said he knew he would be elected because 13 was his lucky number — he was inaugurated March 4, 1913. This year a friend noticed that Candidate Hughes had been given ticket No. 13 and objected, whereupon Mr. Hughes said he had been born on a Friday and 13 was lucky, for him. The count showed 272 electoral votes for Wilson and 259 for Hughes, giving Wilson 13 plurality—this was the status when the Democrats were notified by Secretary Tumulty to "throw up your hats." The waiting was over the vote in California, whose electoral vote is 13; then New Hampshire voted for Wilson by a majority of 131, which gives 13 "going and coming." It follows that 13 is Wilson's number and shows that Mr. Hughes was wrong in laying claim to it.—Florida Times-Union.

The Wauchula Advocate voices our sentiments when it declares that "it is a shame to raise a boy in a country where there is not at least one good circus a year." The pleasant memories of our boyhood are those connected with the circus, and we're its friend. We hope the next legislature will fix the license laws so that good circuses can again come to Florida.—Lakeland Telegram.